

Empire - 2006

Job market forecast for region viewed as not slowing down

Wendy Leung, Staff Writer
Inland Valley Daily Bulletin

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The job market cycle is endless. There are either too many jobs without the workers to fill them or too many employees without enough opportunities. In the constant push and pull of a market so dependent on the economy, the Inland Empire is sure to find itself on one side of the cycle or another.

But employment experts are seeing such an influx of job opportunities in the Inland Empire that few see an end to job growth. The region, with all its land and growth potential, is bringing in jobs in record numbers, say experts, and the challenge becomes not how an employee will find employment but how employers will seek and retain local talent.

Shirley Patrick, staffing specialist at York Employment Services, does not see the Inland Empire slowing down.

"As you drive up and down the Inland Empire, you see these huge warehouses. We've got the dirt to build them," Patrick said. "As for slowing down, I don't see it. I still see the demand for people to fill the jobs to be high."

Big box stores, which are increasingly common and thriving, are opening warehouses in the region and bringing an unprecedented number of jobs, Patrick said.

York Employment Services, located in Ontario, connects 400 to 500 job seekers in the Inland Empire with employment each week. Patrick said the upside of having more jobs than seekers is that wages are becoming more competitive in the Inland Empire.

"We no longer want those \$7.50, \$8 jobs. Most of these warehouses are paying \$11. That has helped the economy be competitive," she said.

The manufacturing industry provides more than 100,000 jobs in San Bernardino County and the county's Workforce Investment Board predicts 12 percent job growth in manufacturing in the next six years. Growth in the logistics industry is expected to grow right alongside the manufacturing industry, with the county projecting an increase of more than 1 million jobs by 2030.

But the manufacturing and logistics sectors are not alone in seeing upturns in employment positions. The number of area jobs requiring higher skills, such as management and executive jobs, is also on the rise.

According to the California Regional Economies Project, much of the state's economy is dependent on the strength of the professional and management services sector, but the jobs require a higher level of skill not met by the labor supply.

The challenge is to convince local talent to stay put, said Barbara Halsey, director of the San Bernardino County Workforce Development Department. Despite the increase in population and home ownership in the county, many are still commuting far for employment opportunities.

"Our challenge is letting people know that there are really fantastic job opportunities in our backyard," Halsey said. "It's difficult when we have people commuting to L.A. and Orange County."

The county's Workforce Development Department, which is federally funded, provides workshops, job

placement and training through its employment resource centers. In 2005, the department helped 77,849 job seekers with job training and vocational services.

In October, the Workforce Investment Boards of San Bernardino and Riverside counties collaborated on a symposium to identify the challenges of a rapidly changing work force and prepare for a 2007 plan to keep regional industries competitive.

Mike Gallo, president of Kelly Space & Technology, said at the Loma Linda University event that the challenge of locating skilled workers has become common across multiple industries.

"People these days have something like seven jobs in a career. You look at the transient work force and it's getting more important to ask how we're going to prepare them with the right skills," Gallo said. "If we don't start now, the same problem will surface in the next 10 years."

Cooperating with local schools is one way to ensure the future work force is prepared, Halsey said. The Workforce Investment Board is working with K-12 educators to promote science, technology and engineering in the schools in a move to fill the demands of highly skilled occupations. It also works with local colleges to create specific industry programs.

One of the industries struggling the most to find workers is health care. According to the Center for California Workforce Studies, the state's nurse-to-patient ratio ranks second to last in the country.

Addressing the shortage, the Workforce Investment Board of Riverside and San Bernardino counties has developed a training program that provides local students with support while reducing turnover in the health care industry.

As the baby boomers in the work force age at a time when global markets bring in increased competition, the challenge to keep the Inland Empire ahead of the curve grows. It is a challenge often overlooked, Halsey said.

"It's always a challenge when you have a healthy economy. The perception is you don't have employment issues," Halsey said. "It just means we have that much need to address work force development issues."

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Kids can do the darndest things at Boys & Girls Club

Michel Nolan, Staff Writer

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For Clifford Hackney, it's business as usual when he goes to work.

There's nothing "usual" about helping kids, however, Hackney emphasizes.

"It's just what we do," he says. "We don't expect accolades."

As chief professional officer for the Boys & Girls Club of San Bernardino, Hackney sees to the needs of kids on a daily basis.

At Christmas, the job is especially gratifying, he says.

"Yesterday we were able to give away more than 400 toys to kids in our annual toy giveaway. We were fortunate to get nine college students to help give out gifts and accommodate the program. It was really great."

Hackney oversees the San Bernardino club, which includes sites in Delmann Heights and Rialto, as

well as the main facility on Ninth Street.

onlineEXTRA
Podcast: [One Voice Q&A with Clifford Hackney.](#)

Because of the local organization's small staff, they also rely on a volunteer pool to help with programs and mentoring.

"We have adult mentors and caring adults who want to help kids," Hackney says.

The Boys & Girls Club serves needs of kids considered "at-risk" in situations ranging from fear of their unsafe neighborhood to lack of a computer to do their homework, according to Hackney.

"Hope and opportunity - that's what we offer young people. We know what our goals are. We just try to stay focused," he says.

From his perspective as a mentor/director of youth programs, Hackney offers this perspective:

Question: What kind of programs does the Boys & Girls Club offer?

Answer: The types of programs we offer as a youth-development facility are recreational, arts and crafts, mentoring, tutorial, after-school services of all kinds - and special swim programs for kids and adults in the summer - computer labs technology centers, and job-ready programs. Also at our facility we offer some adult programs including ESL (English as a second language). Our Reading for Success Program is both a reading and math recovery program for young people who are several levels below where they should be at their age. It's been tremendously successful - even surpassing recommended reading levels."

Q: How many kids are currently participating in the program?

A: "Boys & Girls Clubs

are membership-required organizations. Well over 2,000 young people are registered members. We also have 'other youth served,' young people who just want to come in and participate in activities without filling out an application.

Q: Are a large percentage of club kids considered at-risk youth?



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A: The answer to that question is yes. 'At risk' is an arbitrary term. In my opinion we serve a large population of at-risk kids - not only those with low socio-economic status but young people in a single parent home or in a two-parent home but not getting attention or support from parents. Also at-risk are young people who live in a neighborhood where they feel unsafe, or a young person who wants to avoid gang-related activities and just needs an alternative, or it could be a young person with no one mentoring them in their lives.

Q: Do you know of any at-risk kids whose lives were changed by Boys & Girls Club programs?

A: I know of close to 100 personal stories of young people whose lives were changed by participating in club programs. Many local people, but also celebrities, politicians, business people. Denzel Washington, one of the most recognized names, was a club kid and just recently wrote a book. A councilman in our area was a club kid. I've taken several young men who were identified gang members - delinquent young men - and I offered them an opportunity to come into the club so they could get out of their gang involvement. I pay for their lifeguard training so they can work and go back to school. Most of these young men got back on the right track. There are lots of stories like that.

Q: Has the Boys & Girls Club offered young people an opportunity to voice their concerns over the violent crime that's plagued our city?

A: Whenever something happens in the community, young people are very sharp - aware of things. Sometimes they don't think there's an audience to hear what they have to say. They have an opportunity to come in and participate in our workshops. At the Ninth Street facility we have a full-fledged counseling clinic on site. We also have some staff and clinical therapists and counselors who can give young people an opportunity to voice their feelings. The kids know the club is a safe haven in the community and they can escape some of the things out there and can come inside and discuss things without fear.

For more information about the Boys & Girls Club of San Bernardino, call (909) 888-6751.

Hunting new workers with class

10:00 PM PST on Sunday, December 3, 2006

By DARLA MARTIN TUCKER
dtucker@thebizpress.com

Fontana juice manufacturer Cliffstar Corp. hopes to hire 30 entry-level workers who complete a training program devised by an education and industry consortium that includes Cliffstar. Cliffstar and other manufacturers with growing businesses hope the program will create a pool of new workers with basic technical and professional skills.

"As long as the growth rate continues in the Inland Empire, ... then we will continue to have business," said Pearl Virgen, human resource manager of the 195-employee Fontana operation.

Headquartered in Dunkirk, N.Y., Cliffstar operates nine juice plants and facilities around the United States. The company manufactures 80% of private-label fruit juice consumed nationwide, filling and labeling bottles for Costco, Stater Bros. and other grocers.



Photo By Dan Elliott
Sheila Bell inspects labels at Cliffstar Corp. in Fontana.

The Fontana facility is adding a third juice production line to fill 10- and 12-ounce bottles. Two lines currently produce 32-, 64- and 96-ounce and one-gallon bottles of juice.

People seeking work at Cliffstar and other local factories may begin free, 10-week courses beginning Feb. 5 at Chaffey College's Fontana Workforce Preparation Center. The center is at the corner of Arrow Boulevard and Juniper Avenue.

Class subjects will include work ethics, critical thinking, industrial math, communication, industrial electricity, quality control, tool use, safety and blueprint reading. A consortium of 12 local manufacturers and logistics firms helped design the curriculum. Chaffey College, San Bernardino Valley College and Riverside Community College are members of the so-called Manufacturers' Council.

The San Bernardino County Workforce Investment Board and the Workforce Development Centers of Riverside County are also members.

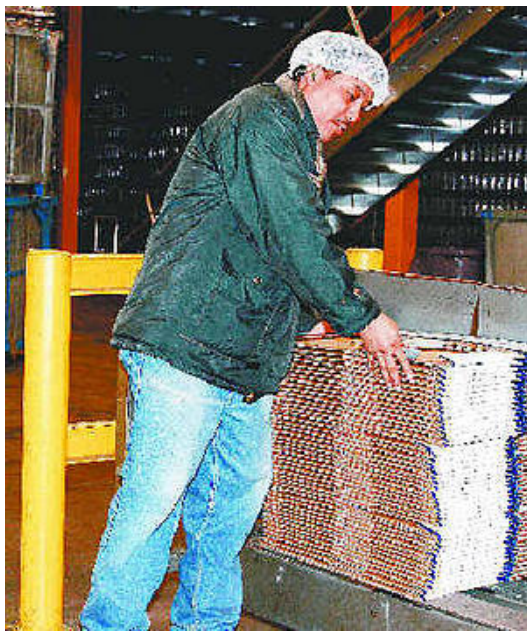
The program is funded by a \$450,000 grant from the California Community College Economic and Workforce Development Agency.

Chaffey College officials are recruiting 25 to 30 people for each 10-week session. The college and possibly employers from the manufacturers' council will interview and assess prospective students, said Kathleen Dutton, director of economic development at Chaffey College.

For limited-English-speakers, the college is developing a vocational English-learning program to begin possibly by March, she said. Some manufacturers will hire those with limited English skills, "but they have to be able to understand basic English," she said.

Companies' hiring requirements vary. Some manufacturers seek workers with high

school diplomas or general educational development credentials while others do not. Many drug test job applicants, Dutton said.



to By Dan Elliott

A case former operator works at Cliffstar Corp. in Fontana.

All program graduates will interview with prospective employers and some may be offered internships, she said. They will have work-site mentors, career pathways and access to advanced training programs the council has already created for incumbent workers.

"It's very innovative. It's a model," Dutton said. "Industry doesn't usually come out of its corner and design a training program."

Kathi Rodriguez, Chaffey director of high-growth initiatives, must pull applicants from a region with a 3% to 5% unemployment rate. This means virtually everyone who wants to work has a job, making recruitment a challenge, she said.

As skilled baby boomers retire, manufacturers need technically skilled employees for their increasingly computerized plants and face a shortage of entry-level workers, Rodriguez said.

"The biggest issue is recruitment," Dutton said.

Rodriguez will make presentations to high school students and the college may mail brochures to residents ages 18 to 25, she said. The college will announce the program in newspapers and in advertisements.

While manufacturing statewide and in Los Angeles County is "bottoming out," manufacturing in the Inland Empire is experiencing modest growth, Jack Kyser, senior vice president and chief economist for the Los Angeles County Economic Development Corp. told The Business Press in November. Companies often compete with overseas businesses who have lower costs.

Manufacturers face a shortage of skilled workers as older employees retire, he said. "Regardless of who does it, [manufacturing training] is very important," Kyser said.

The manufacturing council formed earlier this year to customize training based on the needs of the member companies. The San Bernardino County Workforce Investment Board and the council companies are equally splitting the cost of the program. The work force board is granting up to \$100,000 for the training.

The council created advanced electrical and mechanical training programs that are taught at Chaffey and San Bernardino Valley College, respectively.

In the past, large manufacturers trained workers in-house. But companies downsized and eliminated expensive apprentice programs, said Brett Guge, vice president of administration at California Steel Industries in Fontana. The company, a member of the Manufacturers' Council, is training 20 employees in the advanced skills programs.

California Steel plans to hire people who complete the entry-level program. The company pays from \$11 to \$14 an hour for beginning workers.

Employers want workers who are skilled in welding, print reading and machining, said Ron Maiorano, manager of safety, training and plant protection at California Steel. Maiorano is chairman of the council.

THE BUSINESS PRESS

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NOVEMBER 27, 2006 • THE BUSINESS

DARLA MARTIN TUCKER
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The United States needs to foster entrepreneurship and create high-wage, skilled jobs in the Inland Empire, according to a U.S. Department of Labor initiative.

In mid-December, the San Bernardino County Workforce Investment Board will present a contract to the San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors to conduct work force development studies as part of a national effort.

The work force board wants to use a \$40,000 Labor Department grant to jump start a so-called Innovation Corridor and promote sustainable entrepreneurship and skilled manufacturing and supplier jobs.

The grant that is part of a \$15 million federal program known as the work force innovation in regional economic development, or WIRED award. The department bestowed the funds on a coalition of 60 economic development agencies, colleges, universities and businesses across 13 counties collectively dubbed the Innovation Corridor.

The coalition includes Riverside and San Bernardino counties.

The California Space Authority in Santa Maria submitted a winning proposal and won the bid in February. It was one of 13 regional proposals across the nation that received millions of dollars in federal funds.

"The focus is on talent development and on driving job growth," said Michael Gallo, president and chief executive officer of Kelly Space & Technology in San Bernardino. Gallo is also chief financial officer of the California Space Authority.

Kelly Space, which in the 1990s developed reusable launch vehicles for space travel, created the Aerospace Research & Development Center in San Bernardino in 2005.

The United States can't compete with China and India on wages. "But where we can compete is on leading innovation and entrepreneurship," Gallo said.

Other participants in the 13-county project include Boeing Co., Northrop Grumman, Lockheed Martin, Southern California Edison and NASA Jet Propulsion Laboratory.

"We want to have the private sector buy in because ultimately they are the ones hiring these people," Gallo said.

Project leaders will survey 1,000 manufacturers and suppliers and devise community college training and certification programs with an eye on space and information technology. ■

NEWS

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Center for students an 'oasis of hope'

By Michel Nolan
Staff Writer

It's business as usual at the PAL Center in Muscoy. The center's founder and CEO, Mildred Henry, is making the rounds, poking her head into classrooms, greeting teachers and students.

"How ya doin', Dr. Henry?" they say.

She smiles, exuding joy from every pore, her black curls springing with enthusiasm.

"Here at the end of the world, we have good things happening — important things for young people," said Henry, a professor emeritus at Cal State San Bernardino who holds a doctorate in education.

Her Provisional Accelerated Learning Center is a com-

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>>Mildred Henry

Founder and CEO of the
Provisional Accelerated
Learning Center in
Muscoy



Click on link below to hear Dr. Henry's interview

<http://www.sbcounty.gov/iuploads/Documents/WIB/4923DrHenry.mp3>

“There are a lot of protests and marches on campuses about gang violence, but we’re not marching — we’re working with these kids. We’re educating them, giving them jobs, showing them there is another way to get recognition other than going out and shooting somebody.”

MILDRED HENRY

VOICE

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munity-based, nonprofit organization that aims its programs at the less-advantaged population.

For 20 years, the center has been making good things happen.

Henry and her staff of 50 work with students to get their high-school diplomas, jobs, second chances.

“We are an oasis of hope in a desert that people perceive as no man’s land,” she said.

Something’s working.

Earlier this month, the PAL Center hosted its eighth annual job and health fair. More than 57 vendors attended, as well as eight colleges and universities.

“We’re very proud that we have such diversity on our campus — both staff and students,” Henry said.

“We do have a lot of youngsters who need extra help,” said Henry, who estimated student enrollment at the center at 260.

“Some of these kids are the ones society has given up on,” she said.

“There are a lot of protests and marches on campuses about gang violence, but we’re not marching — we’re working with these kids. We’re educating them, giving them jobs, showing them there is another way to get recognition

other than going out and shooting somebody.

“We’re touching a lot of young people. A lot of lives are being changed. We want people to know these services are here and they are free.”

From her perspective as an educator and rescuer of young people, Henry offered these insights:

Question: Exactly what is the PAL Center?

Answer: Provisional Educational Services is the center’s umbrella, which includes youth-employment programs, child-care center, charter school academy for grades 9-12, which is for anyone who wants to be in an environment that gives more sensitivity, smaller classes, those who may be having difficulty in their structured environment. We also have an Upward Bound program, college-prep program with a 100 percent college-enrollment rate almost every year. We receive our funding through grants.

Q: What was its inspiration?

A: The PAL Center is the result of my experiences with inequities in the South. The center is like the Phoenix — it rose from the ashes — from the ashes of a burned-out farm in Arkansas.

Q: Can you tell us a little about your background in the Deep South and your incentive for education?

A: Because my parents

wanted a piece of that American dream, my family owned three cotton gins over the years. The last one, along with a church, was burned down — the work of an arsonist. My mother, who taught school, decided to move to a home in town so my three siblings and I could go to school. All four of us graduated from college, three with master’s degrees and two of us have Ph.D.s. I can never forget why I am here. My mission is to reach out, touch and help kids who are trying to do something with their lives.

Q: Who are you trying to reach through the PAL programs?

A: We’re trying to reach anyone who needs our services — who needs an education, a job. The outgrowth of employment came about because I noticed the young people on the streets who didn’t have anything to do — particularly the African-Americans or blacks who had a more difficult time getting a job — I experienced that all through my lifetime. We thought we had to do an employment program. With education, we had a program called Rescue Educational Training and Initiative Now. So these kids who were at risk of dropping out — who needed tutoring — we needed to work with them to keep them in the educational sys-

tem. ... The success stories are phenomenal.

Q: You are making a difference at the PAL Center, turning lives around, aren’t you?

A: The young people have been incredible. I meet people all the time who say, “Dr. Henry, you gave me my first job.” We have 72 percent passage on our exit exams, compared to 50 percent at the state level. It’s a testimony to what’s going on here.

Q: The center is on the front line when it comes to transforming at-risk youth into productive community members, isn’t it?

A: When we started this program back in 1986, we didn’t know that programs weren’t surviving during that time. We have a very diverse staff and our staff is made up of role models — they wear shirts and ties. Since 1999, we have had more African-American males than females. That’s phenomenal because the schools can’t keep them. They’re falling through the cracks and we’re graduating them.

■ For more information, to volunteer or to make a donation to the PAL Center, call (909) 887-7002 or go to www.palcenter.org.

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Empire - 2006

Regions job market growing strong

Stephen Wall, Staff Writer
Inland Valley Daily Bulletin

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The Inland Empire economy is producing more jobs than it has people to fill them, said John Husing, the region's pre-eminent economic expert.

"This region's economy has its lowest unemployment rate in the 42 years since I've been studying this economy," Husing said.

The unemployment rate in August was 4.9 percent, down from 5.3 percent in August 2005, Husing said.

Last year, the economy added more than 55,000 jobs. This year, the figure will be closer to about 40,000, Husing said.

Part of the reason for the lack of workers is that some jobs don't pay as well in San Bernardino and Riverside counties as they do in other parts of Southern California.

"We know we have a huge talent base that is taking their skills to Los Angeles and Orange counties every day," said Barbara Halsey, director of the San Bernardino County Workforce Investment Board, an organization that develops programs to support economic growth.

"They moved here because the housing is more affordable, but they maintained their jobs in other counties," Halsey said. "What we are wrestling with is how do we get the word to everybody on the 91 and 60 and 10 freeways who is driving to Los Angeles and Orange counties with all the skills we need back here at home."

Employment growth continues to sizzle in many industries, Halsey said.

Warehousing and distribution centers that started in the west end of the county are moving east and into the High Desert, she said.

Manufacturing companies are growing, along with a strong retail presence along the 10 and 15 freeways in Ontario and Rancho Cucamonga. The continued expansion of the Citrus Plaza shopping center in Redlands is producing jobs, although not necessarily high-paying ones.

Health care services such as clinics and nursing facilities are another prominent feature of the local economy, Halsey said.

Information technology jobs are also seeing growth, she said.

The one area of the employment picture that has gone down is in residential construction jobs as the housing market has slowed.

"That's because we're going through a housing correction where the market is moving from very aggressive to flat," Husing said. "Once they finish their existing projects, we expect to see a large number of construction workers released."

The loss in housing construction workers is expected to be offset by the growth in infrastructure construction --

freeways, industrial and office buildings and retail centers --that is still growing rapidly, Husing said.

There also has been growth in the number of white-collar professionals such as lawyers, doctors, engineers, accountants and financial planners who are deciding to live and work in the county, Halsey said.

The transportation challenges of traffic-clogged freeways make some commuters willing to accept a little less money for the convenience of working closer to home, she said.

"If you consider the cost of commuting and the high gas prices, it seems to make more sense to get paid a little less but have a shorter drive," Halsey said. "I think there are some trade-offs that add value to working close to home."

One of key industries in San Bernardino County is logistics, which provides more than 277,000 jobs and is projected to increase by 36 percent by 2012, Halsey said.

The workforce investment board has launched a program to help logistics companies deal with issues related to their workforce.

The board also recently launched training programs to assist manufacturing companies by upgrading the skill level of their current employees.

Another program is a partnership between the board and Loma Linda University Children's Hospital to enhance the skills for 30 entry-level nurses in San Bernardino and Riverside counties.

Other analysts said that employment will continue to remain strong in the region.

"I don't think you need to be an expert to witness the level of job creation that is going on," said David Mlynarski, a land development consultant in San Bernardino County. "If you at San Bernardino International Airport, all the big boxes and several major hotels that have been built, you have a lot of jobs being created and maintained. I think the Inland Empire in general is going to continue to roll all on this wave of success."



Displaced Katrina victim is helped by Employment Resource Center

By FONTANA HERALD NEWS

December 29, 2006

Everybody needs some help in life. This was especially true for the victims of Hurricane Katrina.

For Rita Riles, the way to rebuild her shattered life came courtesy of the County of San Bernardino's Employment

Resource Center.

"Because of the resources we have, the centers are able to match someone with an ideal career and give them the tools they need to be successful in that endeavor," said Phil Cothran.

Cothran, a long-time State Farm agent whose office is located on Sierra Avenue in Fontana, is a board member of the San Bernardino County Workforce Investment Board. He, along with other private business people, helps guide the County's workforce development efforts.

"In Rita's case, we could take her current skills and upgrade them to allow her to have a lifelong career," Cothran said. "After all she had been through, we think it was a great opportunity to help her back onto her feet."

Along with the center in San Bernardino, there are also centers in Rancho Cucamonga and Hesperia to help the residents of San Bernardino County.

The purpose of the Workforce Investment Board is to create a solid local workforce that fulfills the needs of businesses by making sure job seekers and workers throughout the community have the skills needed in today's workplace.

Its Employment Resource Centers are "one-stop" centers for employment and career development. They reach more people than any other agency in San Bernardino County, impacting between 60,000 and 85,000 people a year.

Some of the services the centers provide include career counseling, providing job seekers with employment listings and giving businesses a resource to build their staffs. Individuals can have their skill levels assessed, again at no charge to them, to create the best career path possible. The path can include training and supportive services to increase and achieve a higher quality of life.

Individuals, like Riles, can also come in and use the center's computers to look at job listings free of charge --or can work with a career counselor, as Riles did.

Riles was in New Orleans at the time the hurricane hit and "lost everything." As disaster fell on the city and the region, Riles was moved out to Houston.

Life wasn't much better there, either, as it was crowded, conditions were bad, and finally Hurricane Rita decided to make matters even worse.

To top that off, she received word that her brother, who was airlifted to a Texas hospital, didn't survive the catastrophe.

That's when Riles decided to hit the road, getting funds from the American Red Cross, and after a long journey, ended up in San Bernardino.

Once in the Inland Empire, Riles saw an advertisement for the center. Everything seemed to improve from there as she worked with career counselor Marge Mendoza-Ware and started to put the pieces in place.

Riles, who had a job at the Superdome in New Orleans, said she just wanted to get her life back. "They worked with me," Riles said.

She added Mendoza-Ware was especially helpful. "She took her time with me," Riles said. "She was patient with me. She was awesome. She was caring. She did a lot of follow-up."

Riles now has a job as a security guard in downtown San Bernardino. She received her Guard Card, a mandatory document to work in security, with help from the center. She has even started going back to school, attending the

University of Phoenix part-time, and is studying criminal justice.

She added she wants to return to Louisiana someday, and said the aftermath of the storm has at times been overwhelming.

"I'm living it," she said of the difficulties faced by Katrina survivors. "It hasn't been easy for me, but I'm trying to take advantage of everything offered to me. I have to do something for myself and move on. It's just one day at a time."

But she'll always have a place in her heart for the San Bernardino County Workforce Investment Board.

"The people here have been so kind to me," Riles said. "The Employment Resource Center has been very helpful. I would recommend them to anybody. They were a blessing to me."